

A nacelle being unloaded into the laydown area at North Brown Hill jobsite.

Transporting wind projects

Chain of responsibility legislation now places increased obligation on all parties involved within the supply chain, including the wind energy industry. With the greater investment in wind energy in Australia, meeting the requirements of transportation and associated functions is paramount, writes Ben Cameron.

Chain of Responsibility (COR) legislation was passed in Victoria and New South Wales in 2005 and its presence has continued to broaden nationally. The fundamental purpose of COR is to make all parties in the road transport supply chain responsible for preventing a breach of road transport laws. It recognises the effects of the actions, inactions and demands of off-the-road parties in the transport chain.

With recent examples of the COR legislation being enforced there has never been a more critical time for those involved in the supply chain, like wind farm developers, to acknowledge the law and reduce their risk exposure to being prosecuted under the legislation. Investing the time to choose an operator that is compliant with the COR is a key component in reducing a wind energy project's exposure to this risk.

Aside from COR legislation, the transport industry is governed by several laws, many of which change from state to state. One voluntary national scheme that is available to the industry

is the National Heavy Vehicle Accreditation scheme. This scheme is centred on three core modules including mass, maintenance and fatigue management. For an operator to become accredited under this scheme, external audits must be conducted, assessing the eligibility of an operator to meet the various criteria involved.

COR requirements in road transport laws now mean that everyone involved in the road transport supply chain – the consignor, consignee, packer, loader and receiver, as well as the driver and operator – can be held responsible for breaches of road laws and may be legally liable. These parties must take all reasonable steps to prevent their conduct from causing or contributing to a breach.

Given the complexity of the transport movements required in wind farm projects, the importance of ensuring each component's movements are conducted in a compliant manner is critical.

To achieve this, a good compliance system needs to use innovation across systems, procedures and equipment. For instance, NOSKE



A tower section is loaded and secured on a specialised trailer, ready for delivery to the jobsite.

Group vehicles are fitted with GPS tracking and communication systems, allowing an accessible tool to track and report on vehicle and driver movements at any one time. These reporting capabilities provide a platform to access driver-level information about hours driven and breaks taken, which is essential information to be complaint with fatigue management modules.

Custom-designed trailer and associated equipment, specific to the transportation of wind turbine components, is also important to ensure fully compliant load restraint systems are utilised for every load.

With the COR legislation continuing to be a real component of projects that incorporate the supply chain, it will pay to spend the time investigating which operator offers the best outcome in terms of safe and complaint oversize transport solutions. -eco

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